

Communities Putting Prevention to Work



PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA Obesity and Tobacco Use Prevention

Communities Putting Prevention to Work (CPPW) is an initiative designed to make healthy living easier by promoting environmental changes at the local level. Through funding awarded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in 2010, a total of 50 communities are working to prevent obesity and tobacco use—the two leading preventable causes of death and disability.

“WE’RE MAKING THIS CHANGE SO THAT RECREATION SPACES CAN BE HEALTHIER, SAFER, AND CLEANER FOR THE TENS OF THOUSANDS OF KIDS AND ADULTS WHO LEARN, PLAY, AND GATHER HERE EVERY YEAR AND FOR ALL OF THE CITY’S RECREATION CENTER STAFF. THE PHILADELPHIA SMOKING BAN PREVENTS CITIZENS FROM RECEIVING SECONDHAND SMOKE IN MANY OF OUR CITY’S BUSINESSES. NOW WE ARE PROTECTING THE CITIZENS IN OUR RECREATION CENTERS.”

— Michael A. Nutter, Mayor, City of Philadelphia

Community Overview

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, which is home to more than 1.5 million residents, is tackling obesity and tobacco use throughout the community. Approximately 67.9% of adults in the city and approximately 41% of youth aged 6-17 are overweight or obese. Additionally, nearly 70% of youth in North Philadelphia, the majority of whom are black or Hispanic, are overweight or obese, which is nearly double the obesity and overweight rate for youth in the United States. Fruit and vegetable consumption is a challenge for residents, with nearly 25% of youth and 30% of adults getting only one serving or less per day. Further, approximately 25% of youth do not get sustained physical activity even once a week. In addition to obesity-prevention efforts aimed at the community’s entire population, certain initiatives target these high-risk groups.

Tobacco use prevention is also a priority health focus, as Philadelphia has the highest rate of adult smoking among the 10 largest U.S. cities, at 25.2%. Additionally, 7.3% of Philadelphia high school students are regular smokers. Nearly one in three youth smokers illegally purchases his or her own cigarettes from local tobacco retailers. According to the Southeastern Pennsylvania Household Health Survey, roughly 20% of city children younger than age 7 are exposed to secondhand smoke in their homes.

Community Successes

If healthy options are not available, then healthy living is not possible. With the support of the CPPW initiative, Philadelphia has implemented a variety of changes throughout the community to make healthy living easier.

To decrease the prevalence of obesity, Philadelphia:

- Opened 10 new farmers’ markets in low-income, high-need neighborhoods and launched *Philly Food Bucks* in more than 25 markets where Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) recipients receive \$2 in *Philly Food Bucks* for every \$5 spent. This initiative has increased SNAP sales by 179% since summer 2009.
- Commenced the *Campaign for Healthier Schools*. As part of this initiative, 160 schools developed health improvement plans in an effort to change the food and physical activity environments in their schools. Approximately 80,000 students will be impacted by this initiative.



“THIS FOOD IS HEALTHIER, AND IT TASTES BETTER. AND I’M DEFINITELY COOKING MORE INSTEAD OF EATING OUT.”

— *Bijou, Philly Food Bucks participant and farmers’ market patron*

Community Successes *(continued)*

- Worked with eight worksites with 65,000 employees to implement or draft healthy beverage standards for vending, catering, and meetings.
- Signed a Mayoral Executive Order to provide work-site lactation support for the City of Philadelphia workforce, reaching 25,000 employees.

To decrease tobacco use, Philadelphia:

- Launched a public education initiative to encourage adults to *Quit with Help. Quit for Good.* Within the first seven months of the campaign, almost three out of every four smokers in Philadelphia had been reached by the initiative.
- Eliminated secondhand smoke at more than 200 city-owned outdoor recreational facilities, playgrounds, and pools, and distributed thousands of wallet-sized cards with information about smoking cessation resources. This effort protects tens of thousands of youth who use these play areas each year.
- Gained approval to require retailers to obtain local permits to sell tobacco products.
- Reduced youth access to tobacco products with a comprehensive approach that includes compliance checks for more than 4,500 retailers, nearly 1,000 in-person trainings in five different languages to educate retailers on how to properly check identification and refuse sales to minors, and increased fines for those who illegally sell tobacco to youth.

(The list above is a sample of all activities completed by the community.)

Philadelphia Makes Healthy Foods Available in Corner Stores

More than 600 corner stores are taking part in Philadelphia’s *CPPW Healthy Corner Store Initiative*. This program supports efforts to increase the availability and sale of healthy, fresh, affordable foods through small-scale stores in underserved communities. Healthy inventory changes, trainings, and marketing materials are providing store owners with the resources to make healthy foods such as fresh produce, low-fat dairy products, and lean meats more prominent and attractive to shoppers. In the first year, more than 500 stores introduced at least two new healthy products to their inventory. A *New York Times* article recognized Philadelphia’s “forward-thinking” efforts to improve access to healthy foods for all residents.

Youth Tobacco Use Targeted

Philadelphia is making tobacco products less accessible to minors. Research from the Philadelphia Department of Public Health showed an alarmingly high density of tobacco retailers near schools. In response to this, the city focused efforts on identifying and issuing citations to more than 1,700 merchants illegally selling tobacco to minors. Through a unanimous decision, Philadelphia also increased the penalty for retailers who illegally sell tobacco to minors from \$100 to \$250.

Leadership Team

The leadership team includes high-level community leaders from multiple sectors, who have the combined resources and capacity to make healthy living easier. Members of Philadelphia’s leadership team are key agents for change in their community. The leadership team includes representatives from the following organizations:

- Office of the Mayor, City of Philadelphia
- City of Philadelphia Department of Public Health
- Comcast Corporation
- Drexel University School of Public Health
- Independence Blue Cross
- Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare
- Rodriguez and Richards, LLC
- School District of Philadelphia
- Temple University
- University of Pennsylvania
- William Penn Foundation

Additional Information

For more information, please visit www.phila.gov/health/Commissioner/ CPPW.html, www.foodfitphilly.org, or www.smokefreephilly.org.